

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 1 with the following rewritten paragraph:

With reference to FIGS. 2 and 2A in which like reference numerals refer to like features in FIG. 1 and at a subsequent fabrication stage, stripes 26 of an oxidation-masking material are fabricated in order to define windows 28 through which oxidation will occur. Each of windows 28, of which one window 28 is shown, separates adjacent stripes 26. To fabricate stripes 26, a blanket layer of oxidation-masking material is deposited over the structure of FIG. 1 and patterned by a standard lithography and etch process. Stripes 26 overlie and cover the upper surface of the capping layer 22 and the insulating layer 16 in regions that, in conjunction with islands 18, bound or flank windows 28. The directional etch process creating the windows 28 leaves a spacer 30 of oxidation masking material covering each of the vertical sidewalls 17, 19 of the active layer 12, which sidewalls 17, 19 extend to the insulating layer 16 and of which vertical sidewall 19 is visible in FIGS. 6A, 6B. The directional etch process creating windows 28 also should stop on the thin etch stop material underlying the oxidation-masking material so as to not erode capping layer 22.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 16 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Oxidation of active layer 12 occurs by transport of the gaseous oxidizing species from the bulk of the oxidizing gas in the heated ambient through the windows 28 due to absorption by the material forming insulating layer 16. The capping layer 22 and stripes 26 of mask 24 overlying the island 18 and the spacer 30 covering the vertical sidewalls 17, 19 of the island 18 shield the active layer 12 against direct inward transport of the gaseous oxidizing species, typically either O₂ or H₂O, from the oxygen-laden environment so that the sidewalls 17, 19 and upper surface 21 of active layer 12 are substantially unaffected by the oxidation process.